

especially in the area of small business, in situations where the cost exceeds what we are able to collect, be able to manage the problems that large businesses have, that nonprofits and individuals have, in a much different way than we currently see.

Next, with that authority, and especially with an oversight board that is independent from the executive branch, and hopefully a restructured congressional oversight—and, remarkably, some have actually proposed that we strike the consolidation of the oversight in the Congress. We had hearings in the Restructuring Commission with Congressman PORTMAN, a Republican from Ohio, and I for over a year, and almost every witness said problem No. 1 is Congress. Remember, the IRS is not Sears & Roebuck. This is not a private-sector organization. They have 535 members of their board—the Congress. There are six committees that have oversight responsibility over the IRS, and what we were told repeatedly, both with anecdotes and with data, was that they need to consolidate the oversight so the Commissioner, with a new independent board, can meet and achieve consensus on what the vision and the purpose of the IRS is going to be. Why? For a variety of reasons, Mr. President. One is making certain that funding is going to be constant, but, more importantly, to make certain that the investment in technology is done right.

This whole effort started a couple of years ago. Senator SHELBY and I, in oversight hearings on the Appropriations Committee, noted with considerable concern that almost \$4 billion of taxpayer money had been wasted in a thing called “tax system modernization,” trying to get the computers to operate, to talk to one another so the stovepipes would not prevent the conversations back and forth.

Tax systems modernization, Mr. President, is very difficult to do, unless you have a shared consensus between the executive and legislative branches, with consolidated oversight on the congressional side and with an independent board that is able to act on behalf of the taxpayers. In that kind of environment, it is much more likely that technology investments will be made right.

Most importantly, I hope the majority leader will instruct the Finance Committee chairman, let's get a meeting next week with Mr. ARCHER, Mr. RANGEL, Senator MOYNIHAN, and Mr. Rubin, and whatever we pass in the Senate committee, let's do it in a fashion that enables us to meet this April 15 deadline.

Mr. President, there are important things in this legislation. I have behind me a chart which I call the IRS Reform Index. I will mention some of the things that are on that chart. The date the IRS reform legislation passed the House with 426 votes to 4 was November 5, 1997. The date by which the Senate Republican leadership promised to bring the IRS reform to the floor is

March 30, 1998. I think the majority leader understood why it needed to be done then—because we need to set a deadline of April 15 to complete our work, and I very much appreciate that that in fact is what is possible for us.

Still, if we expedite the process, rather than putting something out of committee that has no chance of being conferenced and perhaps won't be signed by the President as well—again, one of the worst mistakes here is making the perfect the enemy of the good. Since November 5 to March 30, over 17 million Americans have received a collection notice. That is a huge number of people who have received a collection notice without the power of the law that has passed the House, as well as some significant new powers the chairman wants to provide. That legislation would pass 100-0 if we brought it up quickly. 34 million Americans called the IRS since November 5, nearly 17 million did not get through and of those who did, over 1 million received wrong answers. We have 40 cosponsors in the Senate, and 14 of the Finance Committee's 20 members are cosponsors of the bill. All this is to say that, if we want to pass good, strong legislation and meet the April 15 deadline, there is absolutely no legislative reason for us not to.

I am hopeful that sometime early next week the majority leader will talk with the Finance Committee chair and say meet with Mr. RANGEL, meet with Mr. ARCHER, meet with Mr. MOYNIHAN and Mr. Rubin; let's have a joint meeting so whatever we pass out of the Finance Committee we can pass here on the floor of the Senate, conference it quickly with the House, get it on to the President for signature, meet the April 15 deadline that 120 million American taxpayers have imposed upon them under current law.

I thank my colleagues and I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 86

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when we complete our business today there be 44 hours remaining for debate on the budget resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I further ask that when the Senate completes its business on Monday, March 30, there be 34 hours remaining on the budget resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEARS 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, AND 2003

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar Order No. 330, the fiscal year 1999 concurrent resolution on the budget.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 86) setting forth the Congress budget for the U.S. Government for fiscal years 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and revising the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1998.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the concurrent resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the presence and use of small electronic calculators be permitted on the floor of the Senate during consideration of the 1999 concurrent resolution on the budget.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that staff of the Senate Budget Committee, including congressional fellows and detailees named on the list that I send to the desk, be permitted to remain on the Senate floor during consideration of S. Con. Res. 86 and that the list be printed in the RECORD. Mr. President, the list is for both majority and minority.

I send the list to the desk at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The list follows:

MAJORITY STAFF

Victor Block, Amy Call, Jim Capretta, Lisa Cieplak, Allen R. Cutler, Kay Davies, Larry Dye, Beth Felder, Alice Grant, Jim Hearn, Bill Hoagland, Carole McGuire, Anne Miller, Mieke Nakabayashi, Maureen O'Neill, Brian Riley, Mike Ruffner, Amy Smith, Austin Smythe, Bob Stevenson, Donald Marc Sumerlin, Winslow Wheeler, Sandra Wiseman, Gary K. Ziehe.

MINORITY STAFF

Amy Peck Abraham, Phil Karsting, Daniel Katz, Bruce King, Jim Klumpner, Lisa Konwinski, Diana (Javits) Meredith, Martin S. Morris, Sue Nelson, Jon Rosenwasser, Paul Seltman, Scott Slesinger, Barry Strumpf, Mitchell S. Warren.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full floor access and privileges of the floor be granted to Austin Smythe and Anne Miller on S. Con. Res. 86.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, fellow Senators—Senator LAUTENBERG is